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RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 000333

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/12/2016  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MASS](#) [MARR](#) [EZ](#)  
SUBJECT: MISSILE DEFENSE: CZECH GOVERNMENT AGREES TO  
NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE U.S.

REF: PRAGUE 262

Classified By: Political Economic Counselor Michael Dodman  
for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (U) The Czech Cabinet took the formal decision on March 28 to begin negotiations with the United States on basing a U.S. missile defense radar on Czech Territory. In a televised press conference following the Cabinet meeting Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek emphasized that this decision would begin a long period of negotiation with the United States.

¶2. (C) Later in the day on March 28 MFA Political Director Martin Povejsil passed the formal Czech diplomatic note to the DCM. The note states that "the Czech Republic has decided to start negotiations with the United States on fielding a radar..." The note also authorizes site survey work to continue. In describing the government meeting that morning, Povejsil said he was surprised at the active and constructive debate over the note. He said several individual ministers expressed views, some of them focusing on legal/constitutional issues, and others (i.e., the Greens) on the importance of a link to NATO. Povejsil highlighted in particular the compromise language agreed to on the latter: "The MFA underlines that the Czech Republic will strive for the future incorporation of the Radar into the architecture of the emerging Alliance missile defense system and will negotiate with the United States accordingly." PM Topolánek used similar language in his press conference.

¶3. (C) In addition to the NATO reference, the Czech note is clearly drafted with an eye to winning over skeptics within the coalition. It makes repeated references to actions taking place "in accordance with Czech law." It also mentions security guarantees, but this and other language on what could be considered sensitive topics are all couched in conditional, non-binding terms.

¶4. (SBU) The Czech government intends to "declassify" their note (it currently has the equivalent of an SBU classification) in 48 hours and send copies, under cover of a letter from the Foreign Minister, to the Speakers of both chambers of Parliament, and to the President, in accordance with Czech procedures. These letters will state that diplomatic correspondence is not intended for public release (a point PM Topolánek made directly in his press conference), and further make clear the U.S. request that this not happen. However, MFA officials reminded us that once the note is in the hands of Parliament they can not control what any individual member may do.

¶5. (U) A copy of the translated Czech diplomatic note is being scanned and will be sent to Michelle LaBonte in EUR/NCE

(202) 647-3191. Originals will be pouched to EUR/NCE.  
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